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SUBJECT: NEPAL: MAOISTS BACK 7-PARTY APPROACH TO BOYCOTT
ELECTIONS

Classified By: Charge Elisabeth Millard, Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

1. (C) Maoist leader Prachanda announced the Maoist's support of the seven party alliance agenda, including the parties' June 18 decision to boycott municipal elections and to not recognize government appointments at the local and district level. Prachanda also said that he had ordered a halt to all violence against unarmed persons, the same day that Maoist insurgents levied their largest attack on government forces since Siraha in May. End summary.

Seven Parties to Boycott Elections

2. (U) Top leaders of the seven-party alliance announced on June 18 their decision to boycott the King's proposed municipal elections, asserting that the King's "unconstitutional government does not have legitimacy." The parties' official statement said that elections would "only enhance and help cement authoritarian rule." The parties said they would not cooperate with "nominated presidents and deputies," and vowed to expel members who support "the King's authoritarianism." The parties called upon the Maoists to express commitment not to disrupt educational and normal activities, but to join the parties' peaceful movement for restoration of absolute democracy, civil liberties, human rights, lawful state and all democratic norms and values.

Maoists Support Parties

3. (U) Maoist leader Prachanda in a statement issued on June 19 announced the Maoist's support of the seven party alliance agenda, including the parties' decision to boycott municipal elections and not recognize government appointments at the local and district level. Considering the party alliance's request to shun violence and not disrupt the pro-democracy movement, Prachanda said he had ordered a halt to all violence against unarmed persons "even if they were criminals." However, the statement was silent on the parties' demand that the Maoists lay down their arms. It also did not provide any reaction to the parties' call for a reinstatement of parliament.

Large Scale Maoist Attack

4. (C) Meanwhile, on June 19, five security personnel and three rebels were killed in a late night attack by hundreds of Maoist insurgents at government offices in the Diktel District Headquarters in Khotang in eastern Nepal. An RNA Operations Officer told EmbOff that 400-500 Maoists attacked two separate military targets three kilometers apart, setting fire to the District Administrative and District Police office buildings destroying property and documents, and breaking into the District Jail allowing more than 60 prisoners to escape. According to the RNA, those released were not/not Maoists. The Maoists also kidnapped one policeman. While this was the largest Maoist attack on government forces since Siraha in May, the RNA battalion was not in danger of being overrun.

Future Prospects

5. (C) Arjun Narsingh KC, NC spokesperson, said the seven parties would agree to constituent assembly elections if Maoists were ready to enter the peaceful political process by giving up violence. However, a June 20 Himalayan Times editorial cautioned that it may not be helpful to the country if the calls from the parties to the Maoists are being used "merely to raise the Maoist bogey as a bargaining chip with the palace." Former Speaker of the House of Representatives and facilitator for previous Maoist-Government talks and now human right's advocate Daman Nath Dhungana cautioned EmbOff that he did not know to what extent the parties and the Maoist's relationship "was being stage managed." However, he

gave India high marks for daring to take initiative to facilitate party-Maoist dialogue as the parties and the King were so far apart.

Comment

16. (C) Post is closely following the parties relationship with the Maoists while continuing to encourage dialogue between the parties and the King. The Maoists seem to be taking a two-pronged approach pushing for discourse with the political parties while simultaneously showing they have the military strength to attack RNA positions.

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